The Westminster Catechism

ORATORIO
FOR
SOLO, DUET, QUARTET
AND CHORUS



BY

REV. S. K. EMURIAN

AND

HENRI EMURIAN



Price - Single Copy - - One Dollar Twelve or More - Seventy-five Cents Each

PUBLISHED BY
S. K. EMURIAN
NORFOLK, VIRGINIA

Foreword

THROUGH many centuries the Westminster Shorter Catechism has played an important part in the various branches of the Reformed Churches, producing sturdy, self-sacrificing, Christ-like character.

This musical setting of the Catechism is prepared with the earnest hope that it will lead all who are already familiar with its fundamental truths, into a deeper appreciation, and also interest and instruct many who are not as yet acquainted with it.

Special effort has been made to express these sublime truths in simple and tuneful music and yet retain the spirit of true and reverent worship.

This antiphonal arrangement of the Catechism will be found useful in the regular services of the Church; in the Church Schools; in the Young People's Societies; in the Summer Conferences; and in the Home Circle.

Acknowledgements are due to my son Henri Emurian, Minister of Music, First Baptist Church, Wilmington, North Carolina, for valuable assistance in re-arranging many parts; to Rev. Ernest Trice Thompson, D.D., Litt.D., Professor of Church History, Union Seminary, Richmond, Va., for a concise history of the Catechism; and to my friend Rev. Henry W. McLaughlin, D.D., Secretary of Country Church and Sunday School Extension, for continued encouragement.

May the singing of these great and living truths echo and re-echo in our hearts and lives, thus enriching and deepening the Spiritual life of our beloved Church.

Norfolk, Virginia February, 1936

S. K. EMURIAN.

Second Printing, 1949

A Concise History of the Shorter Catechism

On June 12, 1643, in the reign of Charles I, an ordinance of Parliament was issued, calling an assembly of divines to meet at Westminster on the first day of the following month. The object of the assembly was declared to be "to settle the government and liturgy of the Church of England, and for the vindicating and clearing of the doctrine of the said church from false aspersions and vitu perations, as should be agreeable to the Word of God, and most apt to procure the peace of the church at home and bring it unto near accord with the Church of Scotland and other Reformed Churches abroad."

The "Westminster Assembly" thus convened contained a few Congregationalists and Episcopalians, but its overwhelming majority were Presbyterian Puritans. Six Scotch commissioners without vote, but with much influence, also sat in the Assembly. One of the best informed German historians says of this Assembly: "A more zealous, intelligent and learned body of divines seldom ever met in Christendom." Philip Schaff says its activities "form the most important chapter in the ecclesiastical history of England during the 17th century. Whether we look at the extent or ability of its labors, or its influence upon future generations, it stands first among Protestant councils."

The Assembly presented to Parliament a Directory of Worship and a thoroughly Presbyterian system of church government in 1644. Its famous confession of faith was laid before Parliament late in 1646. The next year the Assembly completed two caterchisms, a Larger for pulpit exposition and a Shorter for the training of Children. Both were approved by the English Parliament in 1648.

The Westminster Confession of Faith and the Longer and Shorter Catechisms by common consent present the clearest, strongest, most logical and most careful symbolical statement of the Calvinistic scheme of Christian doctrine. Most popular of the three doctrinal statements, and most influential has been the Shorter Catechism, which for brevity, clarity of thought and logical completeness stands unsurpassed.

The influence of the Shorter Catechism has been particularly great in Scotland. Approved by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in that land in 1648, it has been, according to Innes, "for many generations, the real creed of Scotland so far as the masses of the people are concerned." Taught in the public schools, its logic and devotion have entered into the very fibre of the race. It has occupied the same position, and wielded a similar influence among the Scotch-Irish, the staunch, sinewy Presbyterians of the North of Ireland.

With the Puritan emigration from England and the Presbyterian emigration from Scotland and North Ireland, the Westminster standards were planted on the virgin soil

of America. The Confession of Faith was adopted 'for substance of doctrine' by the Congregationalists of Massachusetts in 1648 and those of Connecticut in 1708. The Shorter Catechism was used as a text book in the New England schools.

In 1693 a catechism was prepared by Baptists in London, which was taken in large measure from the Westminster Shorter Catechism, and which follows closely its order and method. It is the only Catechism which has found general acceptance among Baptists in England and America.

The various Presbyterian bodies of English and Scotch descent have all adopted and used the Westminster Standards, including the Catechism. Thus the mother Synod of Presbyterianism in America agreed in 1729 "that all the ministers of this Synod or that shall hereafter be admitted to this Synod, shall declare their agreement in and approbation of the Confession of Faith, with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms of the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, as being, in all the essential and necessary articles, good forms of sound words and systems of Christian doctrine, and do also adopt the said Confession and Catechisms as the confession of our faith." The Catechism has remained one of the doctrinal standards of most of these bodies till the present day.

The education of the children of the church centered about the Shorter Catechism till far into the 19th century. Ministers were expected to catechise the members of their congregation, adults as well as children and youth. With the coming of the Sunday School, and modern programs of religious education, the catechism has suffered increasing neglect, but in many parts of the church it is still regarded as a valuable part of the educational curriculum. Thus the Directory for Worship of the Presbyterian Church in the United States states that "the Bible, together with the catechisms, shall be the chief text books of the Church school, the center of every course of instruction."

Though the influence of the Catechism has been felt most deeply in English speaking lands, and especially among the Presbyterian churches of England, Scotland, Ireland, Canada, Australia and the United States, it has extended far beyond the borders of these lands. Translations have been made into Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Syriac, Arabic, Portugese, Welsh, as well as the more familiar tongues.

In these days when catechetical instruction has declined, it may be that this incomparable statement of Calvinistic doctrine will bear new fruit, through the musical setting so admirably arranged by Rev. S. K. Emurian. Through such a medium, devotion, instruction and aesthetic enjoyment may be combined to the edification of God's people and to the glory of His most Holy Name.

ERNEST TRICE THOMPSON.

Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Virginia. February, 1936.

THE WESTMINSTER SHORTER CATECHISM Part First

Arr. by HENRI EMURIAN

Rev. S. K. EMURIAN





























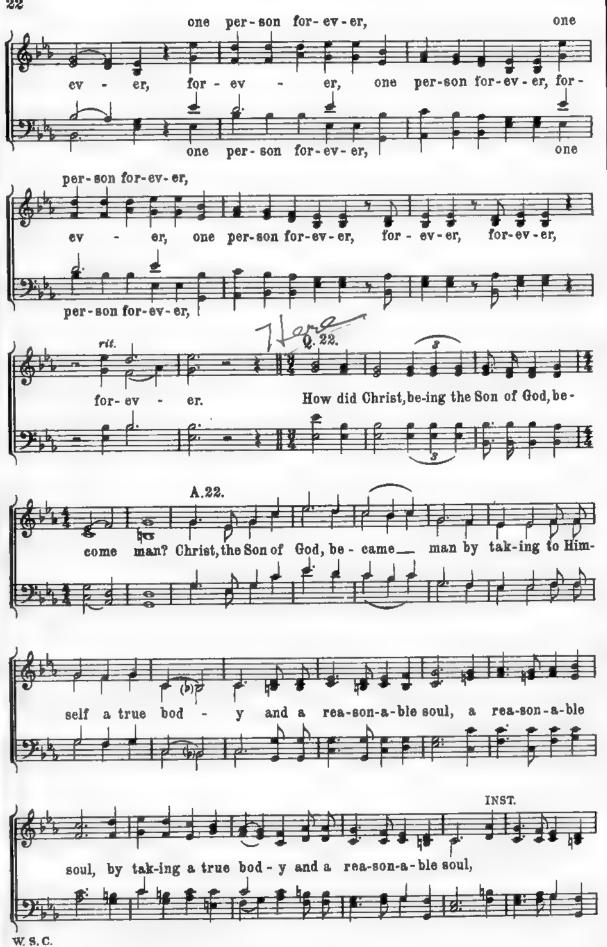


(a) Starting with the word "self" through the word "hell" the Altos may sing in unison with the Sopranos, and Tenors may sing the alto part as written. W. S. G.



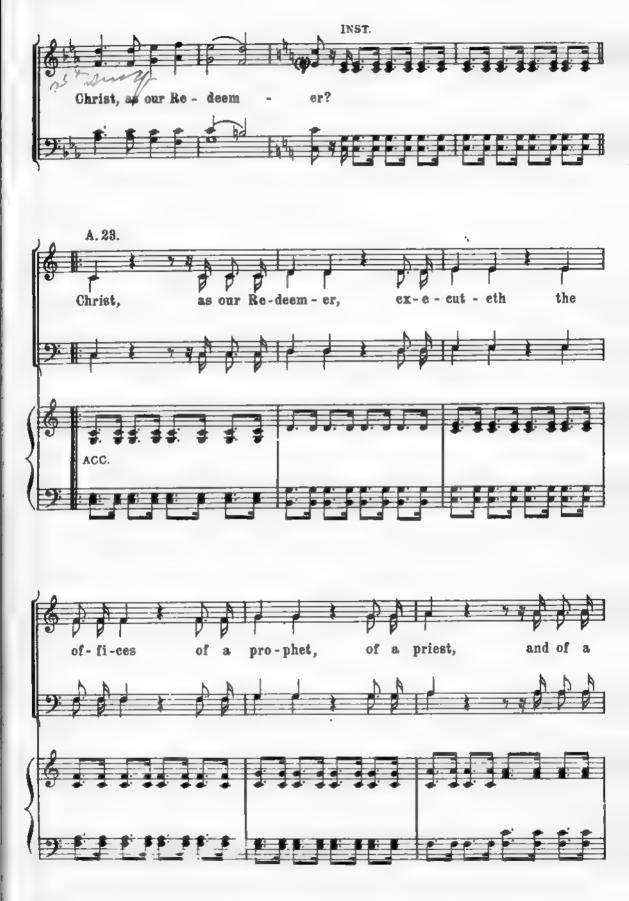






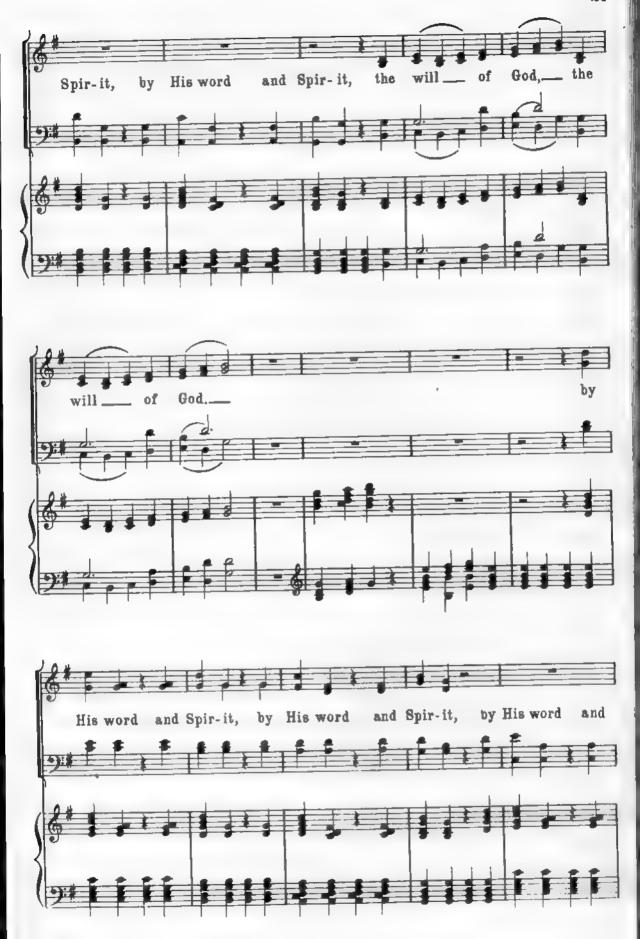




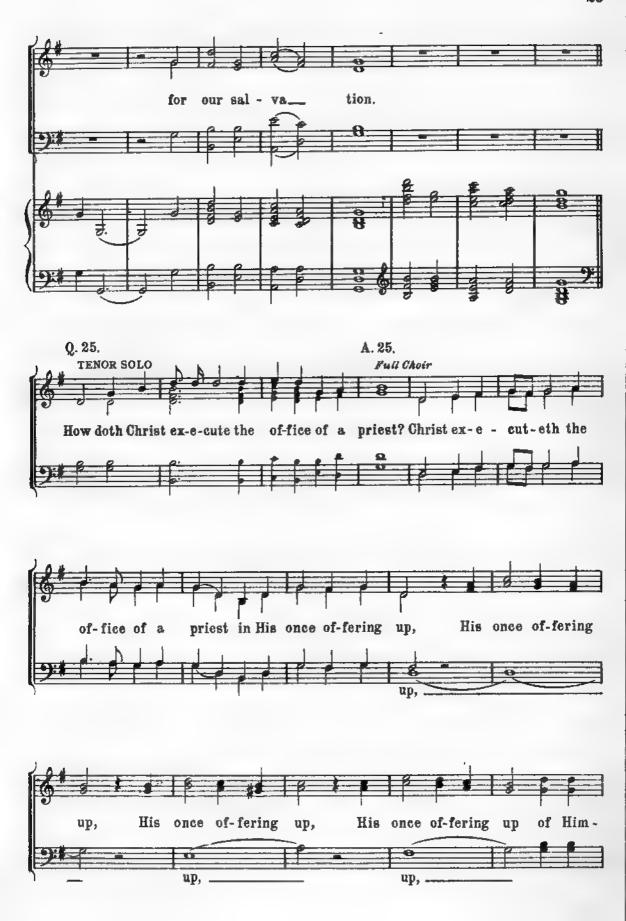






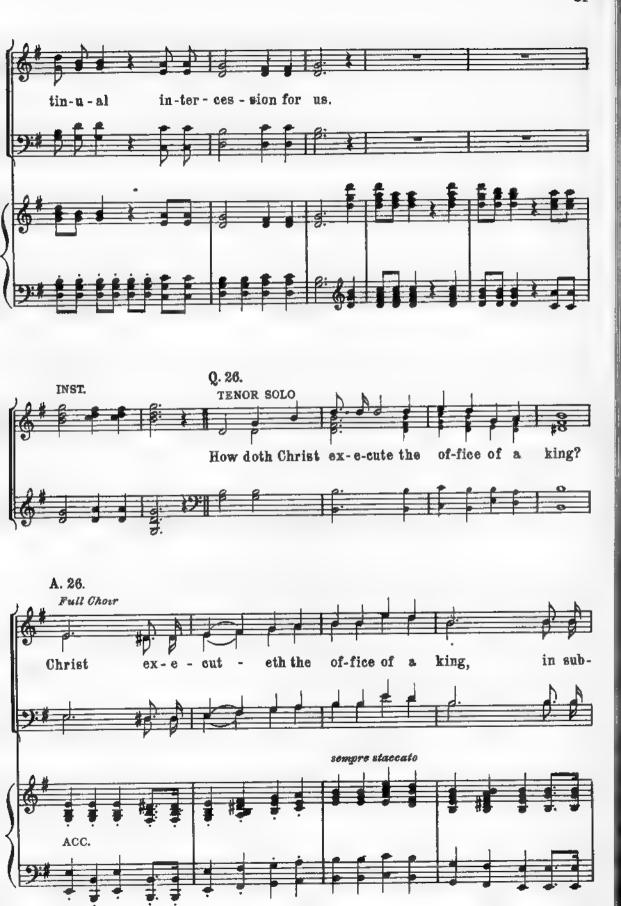




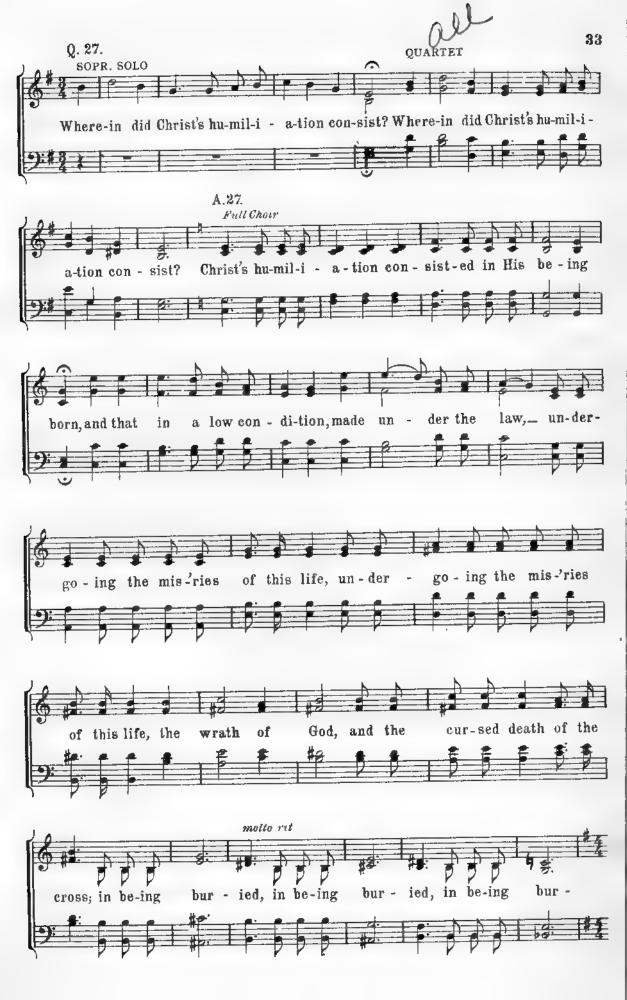


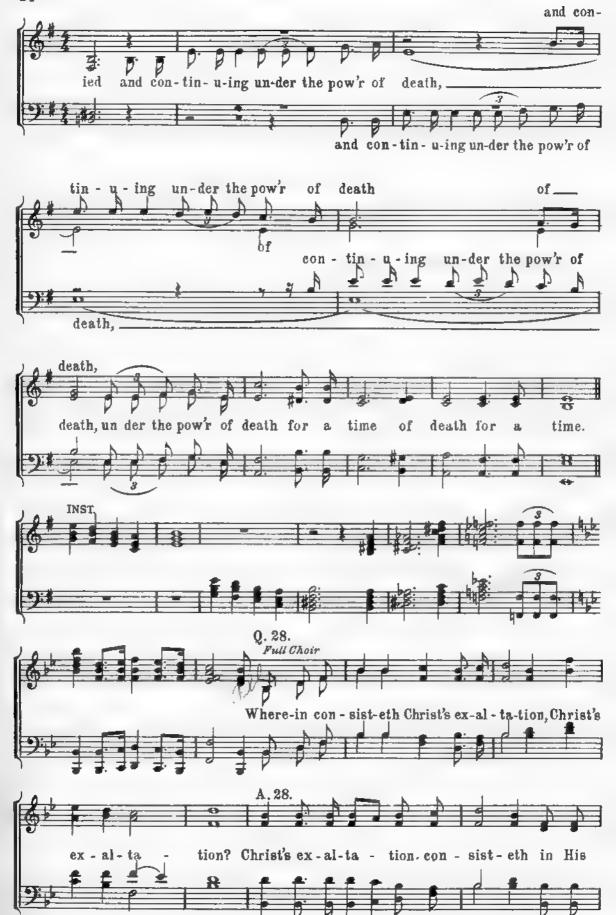
W. S. C.







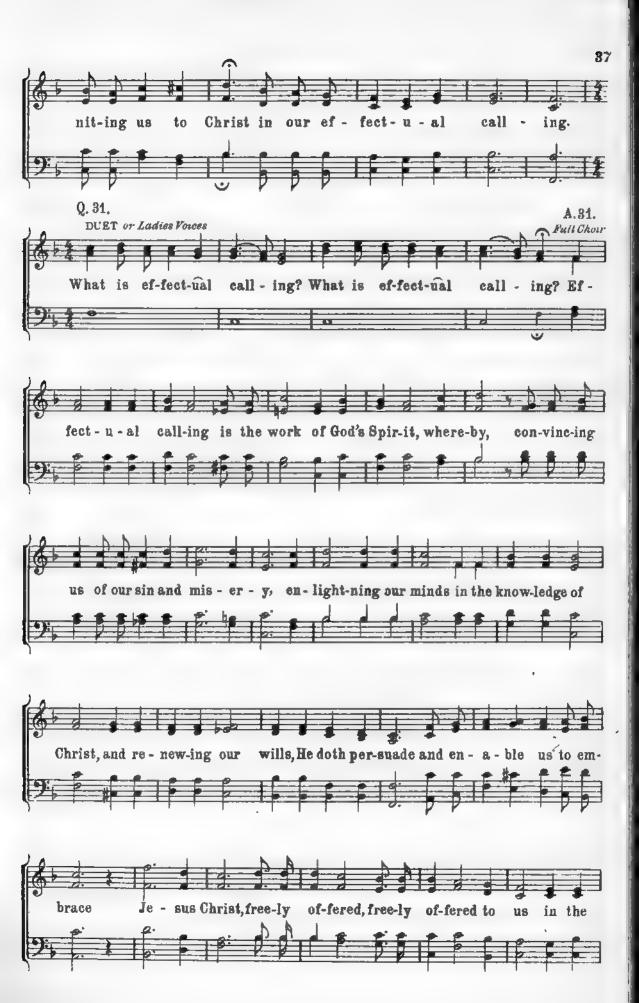








W. S. C.



















(a) Tenors lead out on word "resurrection?"







W. S. C.







W. S. C.

